



Record Sculpt

D^R JEREMY TAYLOR.



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THE LIFE
OF
BISHOP TAYLOR,

AND

The PUREST SPIRIT of his WRITINGS,

EXTRACTED AND EXHIBITED

BY

JOHN WHEELDON, A. M.

^{TK}
RECTOR of WHEATHAMSTED-HERTS,

AND

PREBENDARY of LINCOLN.

LONDON:

Printed by GEORGE BIGG,

1789.

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PRESENTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

LONDON:

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1789

TO THE HONOURABLE
FREDERIC CAVENDISH

SIR,

THOSE who are acquainted with our two situations, respecting the conveniencies and comforts of life, will hardly suspect this dedication to have proceeded from any intentions merely fordid: because you have nothing to give, in my way, but a banquet instead of a benefit; and I have nothing to ask, but the rare felicity of sharing your convivial hours.

Besides the complacency redounding from our conversation, I rejoice in heaving to you this wave-offering of my hand—the purest

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writings

writings of a *Man clothed with a multitude of Mind*: for when Mason, Hurd, and Gray, so exquisite as they are, by unanimous confession, in all the excellencies of moral painting, when these Poets and Pen-men, in form and moving so express and admirable; have taken Bishop Taylor into their business and bosoms, I was determined to follow their example, in *gilding refined gold, and throwing a perfume on the violet.*

The flashes of genius, in many writers, whether polemical, or poetical, resemble a painted flame, which amuses the eye, without warming the heart: but whoever is introduced to the writings of Bishop Taylor, by accident or design, must have a very depraved, or a very disingenuous mind, that is not the better for his acquaintance.

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This was my motive, and was it not a pleasing one? for giving these fine pieces in miniature to the world; not having dared to alter or re-touch one original feature, but purely to revive their faded graces by the polish of a New Edition.

It were extravagant and almost impossible, in a general encomium, to give the common reader an adequate idea of Taylor's amazing capacity. They who would fathom his mighty mind must read all his works, which many cannot, which many will not, and which most are unable either to purchase or understand.

These little Pearls, which I have drawn from his ample store, for common usage, will shine and glister, and be admired in a distinct position: but set in the full blaze
of

of his other beauties, would be totally absorbed and extinguished in general excellence.

Let me then be indulged the vanity of adopting a quotation from an eminent writer, in honour of two characters, to which my Favourite, by your own concession, is no ways inferior.

“ To live in the voice and memory of
 “ men, is the flattering dream of every
 “ adventurer in Letters : and for me who
 “ boast a veneration for two names, whose
 “ virtues would atone for a bad age, and
 “ their abilities make a bad age a good
 “ one : for me not to aspire to the best
 “ mode of this ideal existence, the being
 “ carried down to remote ages, along with
 “ them who will never die, would argue
 “ a strange insensibility to human glory.”

A
FUNERAL SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE

OBSEQUIES

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

JEREMY,
LORD BISHOP OF DOWN:

WHO DECEASED AT

LISBURN E,

AUGUST 13, 1667.

BY

GEORGE RUST,
LORD BISHOP OF DROMORE.

FUNERAL SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

CHURCH OF ST. MARY

ON THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

JEREMY

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN

WHO DECEASED AT

ELISBURGH

AUGUST 13, 1867

BY

GEORGE H. UST

LORD BISHOP OF BROMFORD

A FUNERAL SERMON.

I JOHN, Chap. III, ver. 2.

It doth not yet appear, what we shall be.

GLORIOUS things are spoken in Scripture concerning the future reward of the righteous; and all the words that are wont to signify what is of greatest price and value, or can represent the most enravishing objects of our desires, are made use of by the Holy Ghost, to recommend unto us this transcendant state of blessedness: such are these; rivers of pleasures: a fountain of living water; a treasure that can never be wasted nor taken away; an inheritance in light; an incorruptible crown; a kingdom, the kingdom of God and Christ: a crown of glory; righteousness and immortality—the vision of God; being filled with all the fullness of God. An exceeding and eternal weight of glory; words too big for any expression; and after all that can be said, we must resolve

with our Apostle : It does not yet appear, what we shall be.

At this distance we cannot make any guesses or conjectures at the glory of that future state. Men make very imperfect descriptions of countries or cities, that never saw the places with their own eyes. It is not for any mortal creature to make a map of that Canaan, that lies above : it is to all of us, on this side the grave, an undiscovered country. It may be, some Heavenly Pilgrim, that with holy thoughts and ardent desires is travelling thitherward, arrives sometimes near the borders of the Promised Land, and gets upon the top of Pisgah, and there has an imperfect prospect of a brave country, that lies afar off; but he cannot tell how to describe it, and all he can utter to a curious enquirer, *is only this* : If he would know the glories of it, he must go and see it. It was believed of old, that those places which lie under the line, in continual heat, where not habitable by man or beast : but later discoveries tell us, that they are the most pleasant countries upon earth. Of all the regions of the intellectual world, under the direct beams of the Sun of Righteousness, is an eternal Spring, where
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the Tree of Life beareth twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth her fruit every month : thus we tell of fruitful meads, and spacious fields, and winding rivers, and purling brooks, and chanting birds, and shady groves, and lovely bowers, and pleasant gardens, and stately palaces, and goodly people, and excellent laws, and sweet societies ; and just such discourses as a blind man would make about colours, so do we talk of those things we never saw, and disparage the state while we would recommend it : when St. Paul was caught up into the third Heaven, he saw things unutterable by a mortal tongue, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, said the beloved disciple, that lay in our Saviour's bosom.

What our eagle-sighted Evangelist acknowledges, not yet to appear in perfection, we must be content imperfectly to represent : but it is the beginning and the beauty of divine consolation to read and be assured, that vanity and misery in that paradise have no place. Here the worm lies at the root of our enjoyments, and the gourd in whose shade we are so much, grows up in a night, and in a night will perish : but Heaven is not subject to these uncertainties, though sorrow may

endure for a night in this world, yet joy will spring up in the morning of eternity.

The robes of glory, which are promised to the faithful in their happy resurrection, will be accommodated to the soul in her highest exaltations. And this is an argument, that the Gospel dwells so much upon the redemption of our bodies, like unto his glorious body; and we are taught to look upon it as one great point of our reward, that we shall put on immortality, and bear the image of the Heavenly Adam: and this is founded upon the highest reason: for though it is disputable whether the soul can act independently of all matter whatever, at least we are assured that the state of conjunction is most con-natural to her, and that intellectual pleasure itself is not only multiplied, but the better felt, by its redundancy upon the body and spirits: and if it be so, then the purer and more defecate the body is, the better will the soul be appointed for the exercise of its noblest operations.

The oracle tells Amelius, enquiring what was become of Polinus's soul, that he was gone to Pythagoras, and Socrates, and Plato, and as many as had borne a part in the quire of heavenly love.

love. And we may say to every good man; that he shall go to the company of Prophets and Apostles, and all the holy men in all ages of the world, that have been the salt of the earth, to preserve mankind from utter degeneracy and corruption. And which is more than all, to the head of our recovery, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose story is now so delightful, for innocence and patience, and mercy and benignity, and his deep compassion for mankind. And if St. Augustine made it one of his wishes, to have seen Jesus Christ in the flesh, how much more desirable is it, to see him out of his terrestrial weeds, in his robes of glory! And this I cannot but look upon as a great advantage and privilege of a future state: for I am not apt to swallow down the conceit of the schools, that we shall spend eternity in gazing upon the naked deity; but our great part of Heaven will be the blessed society in their many mansions; their enravishing beauty, their inward life and perfection, flowering forth, and raying itself through their glorified bodies:—the rare discourses of conversation;—their pure and spotless, and yet most ardent embraces of love:—

their ecstatic devotions among seraphim and angels—and prophets, and apostles, and martyrs; singing hallelujahs to the Father of Spirits, and to the Lamb for ever and ever: for truth and goodness are the communications of the divine nature, which never satiate, but enlarge the soul for receptions to immensity.

Salvation, says the Areopagite, can no other-ways be accomplished, than becoming God-like: it does not appear what we shall be, but when he shall appear, we shall be like him; says our Evangelist, for we shall see him as he is. If the sovereignty of God should dispense with our obedience, the nature of the thing would not permit us to be happy without it. If we live only the animal life, we may be happy as beasts are happy; but the happiness that belongs to a rational, intellectual being, must result from a sense of holiness, and a conformity to all God's infinite perfections.

Supreme glory in the mansions, is shadowed forth to believers obedient, in these words.—

Father! I will, that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory: and having overcome their spiritual enemies,

enemies, they shall eat of the hidden manna, and become pillars in the Temple of God, and shall go out no more; they shall stand before the throne of God continually, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell amongst them. This is that silent touch with God, that fills the soul with inexpressible joy and triumph; but the perfect understanding of them, belongs to the future state of comprehension. And then how pleasant, beyond all imagination, must it be for the soul to be swallowed up in eternal sweetness, like a spark in the fire, or a beam in the sun, or a drop in the ocean!

But though it does not yet appear what we shall be, so much already appears of it, in a few clusters of this good land, that we may feed in thought with a most unbounded imagination: for till we come to enjoyment, all the words in the world cannot convey the notion of it into our minds, and it is only to be understood by them that feel it. In our way through this wilderness, towards the heavenly Jerusalem, we should be clearing our eyes for the vision of God, and calm our spirits in such aspirations.

JOHN TRACY, 1792. 1. Like

1. Like as the Hart desireth the water brooks,
so longeth my soul after thee, O God!

2. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for
the living God, when shall I come to appear
before the presence of God?

3. My tears have been my meat day and night,
while they daily say unto me, where is now thy
God?

4. Now when I think thereupon, I pour out
my heart by myself: for I went with the multi-
tude, and brought them forth into the house of
God.

5. In the voice of praise and thanksgiving,
among such as keep holy-day.

6. Why art thou so full of heaviness, O! my
soul! and why art thou so disquieted within me?

7. Put thy trust in God; for I will yet give
him thanks for the help of his countenance.

8. My God! my soul is vexed within me;
therefore will I remember thee concerning
the land of Jordan, and the little hill of
Hermon,

9. One deep calleth another, because of the
noise of the water-pipes; all thy waves and
storms are gone over me,

10. The

10. The Lord hath granted his loving kindness in the day-time; and in the night-season did I sing of him, and made my prayer to the God of my life,

That he would breathe into our minds those still and gentle gales of divine inspirations, that like so many rivulets, we may be continually moving to the ocean from whence we came; that we may so perfectly discharge ourselves of all strange desires and passions, that our souls may be nothing else but a deep emptiness and vast capacity to be filled with the fullness of God! Let but these be the breathing of our spirits, and this divine magnetism will draw God into our souls, and we shall have some prelibations of that happiness; some small glimpses, and little discoveries whereof, is all that belongs to this state of mortality.

I have as yet done but half of my text: and have another text yet to preach upon, and a very large and copious one; The great person, whose obsequies we come here to celebrate. His fame is so great throughout the world, that he stands in no need of an encomium; and yet his worth is much greater than his fame: it is impossible
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not to speak great things of him, and yet it is impossible to speak what he deserves: and the meanness of an oration, will but fully the brightness of his excellencies: but custom requires that something should be said, and it is a duty and a debt that we owe only to his memory: and I hope his great soul, if it hath any knowledge of what is done here below, will not be offended at the smallness of our offering.

He was born at Cambridge, and brought up in the free school there; and was ripe for the University, before custom would allow of his admittance: but by that time he was thirteen years old, he was entered into Caius College, and as soon as he was graduate, he was chosen Fellow. Had he lived among the ancient Pagans, he had been ushered into the world with a miracle, and swans must have sung at his birth; and he must have been a great hero, and no less than the son of Apollo, the God of Wisdom and Eloquence.

He was a man long before he was of age: and knew little more of the state of childhood, than its innocence and pleasantness. From the University, by that time he was Master of Arts, he removed to London, and became public lecturer
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in the church of St. Paul's; where he preached to the admiration and astonishment of his auditory; and by his florid and youthful beauty, and sweet and pleasant air, and sublime and raised discourses, he made his hearers take him for some young angel, newly descended from the visions of glory: the fame of this new star, that outshone all the rest of the firmament, quickly came to the notice of the great Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, who would needs have him preach before him: which he performed not less to his wonder than satisfaction: his discourse was beyond exception and beyond imitation, yet the wise prelate thought him too young: but the great youth humbly begged his grace to pardon that fault, and promised, if he lived, he would mend it. However, the great patron of learning and ingenuity, thought it for the advantage of the world, that that such mighty parts should be afforded better opportunities of study and improvement, than a course of common preaching would allow of; and to that purpose he placed him in his own college of All-Souls in Oxford, where love and admiration still waited upon him: which so long as there is any spark of ingenuity in the
 breasts

breasts of men, must needs be the inseparable attendants of so extraordinary a worth and sweetness. He had not been long here, before my Lord of Canterbury bestowed upon him the Rectory of Uphingam in Rutlandshire, and soon after preferred him to be Chaplain to King Charles the Martyr, of blessed and immortal memory. Thus were preferments heaped upon him, but still less than his deserts; and that not through the fault of his great masters, but because the amplest honours and rewards were inconsiderable, compared with the greatness of his merit.

This great man had no sooner launched into the world, but a fearful tempest arose, and a barbarous, unnatural war disturbed a long uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, and brought all things into disorder and confusion: but his religion taught him to be loyal, and engaged him on his prince's side, whose cause and quarrel he always owned and maintained with a great courage and constancy; till at last, he and his little fortune were shipwrecked in that great hurricane, that overturned both church and state.

This fatal storm cast him ashore in a private corner of the world, and a tender providence shrouded

shrouded him under her wings, and the prophet was fed in the wilderness; and his great worthiness procured him friends, that supplied him with bread and necessaries. In this solitude he began to write those excellent discourses, which are enough of themselves to furnish a library, and will be famous to all succeeding generations, for their greatness of wit, and profoundness of judgment, and richness of fancy, and clearness of expression, and copiousness of invention, and general usefulness to all the purposes of a Christian: and by these he got a reputation among all persons of judgment and indifferency, and his name will grow greater still, as the world grows better and wiser. When he had spent some years in his retirement, it pleased God to visit his family with sickness, and to take to himself the dear pledges of his favour, three sons of great hopes and expectations, within the space of two or three months: and though he had learned a quiet submission to the divine will, yet the affliction touched him so sensibly, that it made him desirous to leave the country: and going to London, he there met my Lord Conway, a person of great honor and generosity, who
 making

making him a kind proffer, the good man embraced it, and that brought him over into Ireland and settled him at Portmore, a place made for study and contemplation, which he therefore dearly loved : and here he wrote his Cases of Conscience ; a book that is able alone to give its author immortality.

By this time the wheel of Providence brought about the King's happy restoration ; and there began a new world, and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and out of a confused Chaos brought forth beauty and order, and all the three nations were inspired with a new life, and became drunk with an excess of joy : among the rest, this loyal subject went over to congratulate the prince and people's happiness, and bear a part in the universal triumph. It was not long ere his Sacred Majesty began the settlement of the Church, and the great Doctor Jeremy Taylor, was resolved upon for the Bishoprick of Down and Connor ; and not long after Dromore was added to it : and it was but reasonable, that the King and Church should consider their champion, and reward the pains and sufferings he underwent, in defence of their cause and honour. With
what

what care and faithfulness he discharged his office, we are all witnesses ; what good rules and directions he gave his clergy, and how he taught us the practice of them by his own example. Upon his coming over Bishop he was made a Privy-Counsellor ; and the University of Dublin gave him, their testimony, by recommending him for their Vice-chancellor, which honourable office he kept to his dying day.

During his being in this See, he wrote several excellent discourses ; particularly his Disuasive from Popery, which was received with general approbation. This great prelate improved his talents with a mighty industry, and managed his stewardship rarely well ; and his master, when he called for his accounts, found him busy, and at his work, and employed upon an excellent subject : *A Discourse upon the Beatitudes* —which, if finished, would have been of great use to the world, in all the varieties of a Christian state ; but the All-wise God hath ordained it otherwise, and hath called home his good servant, to give him a portion in that blessedness, which Christ hath promised to his faithful Disciples.

Thus having given you a brief account of his life, I know, you will expect a character of his person; but, I foresee, it will befall him, as it does all glorious subjects, that are but disparaged by a commendation: one thing I am secure of, that I shall not be thought to speak hyperboles; for the subject can hardly be reached by any expression: for he was none of God's ordinary works, but his endowments were so many, and so great, as really made him a miracle.

Nature had befriended much in his constitution: for he was a person of a most sweet and obliging humour, of great candour and ingenuity; and there was so much of salt and fineness of wit, and prettiness of address in his familiar discourses, as made his conversation have all the pleasantness of a comedy, and all the usefulness of a sermon. His soul was made up of harmony, and he never spake but he charmed his hearer, not only with the clearness of his reason, but all his words, and his very tone and cadencies were strangely musical.

But, that which did most of all captivate and enrayish, was the gaiety and richness of fancy; for he had much in him of that natural enthusiasm,

thufiam, that infpires all great poets and orators: and there was a generous ferment in his blood and fpirits, that fet his fancy bravely at work, and made it fwell and teem, and become pregnant to fuch degrees of luxuriancy, as nothing but the greatnefs of his wit and judgment could have kept it within due bounds and meafures.

And indeed it was a rare mixture and a fingle inftance hardly to be found in an age; for the great tryer of wits has told us, that there is a peculiar and feveral complexion required for wit, and judgment, and fancy: and yet you might have found all thefe in this great perfonage, in their eminency and perfection. He was one of thofe philofophers, that ingenuoufly fought for truth among all the wrangling fchools. With a large freedom of fpirit, he weighed mens reafons, not their names: he confidered that obedience is the only way to true knowledge, (an argument that he has handled rarely well in that excellent fermen of his, which he calls *Via Intelligentiæ*) that God always and only teaches docible and ingenuous minds, that are willing to hear and ready to obey the light: that it is impoffible, a pure, humble, refigned, God-like foul fhould be

kept out of Heaven, whatever mistakes it might be subject to in a state of mortality: that the design of Heaven was not to fill men's heads, and feed their curiosities, but to better their hearts and mend their lives. Such considerations as these made him impartial in his disquisitions, and gave a due allowance to the reasons of his adversary, and contend for truth and not victory.

To these advantages of nature and excellency of spirit, he added an indefatigable industry, and God gave a plentiful benediction; for there were a few kinds of learning but he was a mystes and a great master in them, in antient moralists, poets and orators, and the refined wits of Italy and France.

His skill was great both in the civil and cannon law, and casuistical divinity: he was a rare conductor of souls, and knew how to counsel, and to solve difficulties, and to quiet consciences. In his younger years he met with some assaults from Popery; and the high pretensions of their religious orders were very accommodate to his devotional temper: but he was always so much master of himself, that he would never be governed by any thing but reason, and the evidence of truth, which engaged

gaged him in the study of those controversies, and to how good purpose, the world is by this time a sufficient witness : but the longer and the more he considered, the worse he liked the Roman cause, and became at last to censure them with some severity : but I have so great an opinion of his judgment and the charitableness of his spirit, that I am afraid, he did not think worse of them than they deserve.

To make a right use of our passions is a greater glory than all other accomplishments; and thus he would lend a ready ear to the complaints, yea to the impertinencies of the meanest persons : and whoever compares his plentiful incomes, with the inconsiderable estates that he left at his death, will be easily convinced, that charity was a steward for a great proportion of his revenue.

To sum up all in a few words—This great Prelate had the good humour of a gentleman, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet, the acuteness of a schoolman, the profoundness of a philosopher, the wisdom of a counsellor, the sagacity of a prophet, the reason of an angel, and the piety of a saint : he had devotion enough for a cloyster, learning enough for an university, and wit enough for a college of virtuosi : and

had his parts and endowments been parcelled out among his poor clergy that he left behind him: it would perhaps have made one of the best diocesess in the world. But alas! our father! our father! the horses of our Israel! and the chariots thereof! he is gone and has carried his mantel with him, and his spirit to Heaven, and the sons of the prophets have lost all that beauty and lustre which they enjoyed only from a reflexion of his excellencies, which were bright and radiant enough to cast a glory upon a whole order of men. But he, the Sun of this our world, is now swallowed up in the great vortex of eternity, and there all his maculæ are scattered and dissolved, and he shines among his brethren-stars, that in their several ages gave light to the world, and turned many souls to righteousness; and we that are left behind, though beneath his perfections, may imitate his virtues, that we may at last sit together with him, even at his feet, in the mansions of glory; which God grant for his infinite mercies in Jesus Christ: to whom, with the Father and Eternal Spirit be ascribed all honour and glory, worship and thanksgiving, love and obedience, now and evermore. *Amen.*

(44)
The MARRIAGE RING.

OR

The Myfteriousness and Duties of MARRIAGE.

EPHESIANS, Chap. V. ver. 32, 33.

*This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ;
and the Church; nevertheless, let every one of you
in particular, so love his wife, even as himself,
and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

THE first blessing from Heaven to Adam,
that Godlike creature in the terrestrial creation,
was society: and that society was marriage, and
that marriage was confederate by God himself,
appointing and hallowing the desire. Accord-
ingly, not only Patriarchs, but parents of the
Sacred Line in the outgoings of Paradise, were
ambitious of children, and impatient of barren-
ness; not only from natural instinct, but a super-
added forwardness flowing from inspiration.

To *encrease and multiply*, was an order highly expedient for a world rich in abundance, but empty of rational enjoyment: in a world able to feed perpetual generations of Adam's progeny, but unréplenished as yet with his offspring to dress and to keep it.

When a family could drive their herds from region to region, and set their children upon camels, and lead them to a fat soil, watered with rivers, and there sit down without paying Rent; they thought of soon swelling into Princes and building cities, and calling the land after their own name.

The next blessing was the promise of the Messiah to descend from the chosen line of Abraham: hence every woman of Israel was anxious for the honour of his affinity, or his birth: and to be childless was a sorrow to the Hebrews, great as their slavery in Egypt, or their dishonours in the Land of Captivity.

But when the Messiah was come, and his doctrine was published, and his ministers but few, and the Disciples were to suffer persecution; and the Jewish nation, in whose bosom the
Church

Church then especially did dwell, were to be scattered in pieces by fierce calamities; and the state of marriage brought many inconveniences in those agitations; it pleased God to inspire his servants with inclination to an holy life: lest marriage should become an accidental impediment to the spreading of the Gospel, which called men from the confinement of domestic charges, to travel, and flight, and poverty, and difficulty, and martyrdom.

In this interval of necessity and zeal mingling together, they sometimes over-acted their love of a single life, to the disparagement of marriage, and the scandal of religion. To snatch the mystery therefore from the hands of zeal and folly, and to place it with original beauty on Christ's right hand, the Apostle states the question aright, lest a present inconvenience should bring in a false doctrine, and a perpetual sin, and an intolerable mischief.

For allowing all the points of solitary virtue, which ought to be allowed in cases of natural deficiency, or the absence of offered love; yet, marriage is avowedly superior to a single life, in
social

social advantages, in the delicacies of friendship, in union of hands and hearts. In this is the proper scene of piety and patience, of performing great and honourable things, while the virgin indeed sends prayers to God, but she sends them only from *one soul*. So then, Marriage has more care, and less danger: it is more merry, and more sad: it is fuller of sorrows, and fuller of joys: it lies under more burdens, but those burdens, by affection, are not oppressive, but delightful: it builds houses, and gathers sweetness like the useful bee, and sends out colonies to people Heaven; while virginity sits like a fly in the heart of an apple, drawing nutrition without affording replenishment, and dies in undiffusive singularity.

Notwithstanding these excellent accomplishments, it concerns all virtuous lovers to consider, that next to the last throw for eternity, the life and death of all their present comfort, are bound up in the golden fetters of marriage. A woman has no sanctuary to fly to from an evil husband; she must dwell upon her sorrows, and complain of his oppressions as subjects do of a tyrant, *in vain*: because she has no appeal in causes of unkindness.

unkindness. And though the man can run many hours from his sadness, if his wife be evil, yet he must soon return to it again; and when he sits in company, he sighs deeply at the bitter objections that sour his bosom; feeling the force of that indisputable Proverb—that it is better to be pleased, than to be merry.

The stags in the Greek epigram, whose knees were clogged with frozen snow upon the mountains, came down to the brooks of the vallies, hoping to thaw their joints with the waters of the stream: but there the frost bound them in a stronger snare of icy captivity. Thus many persons, impatient of single inconveniences, run to others of perpetual duration.

Those who prefer gold before goodness in connubial contracts, shew themselves to be less than money, by overvaluing it, to all the content and wise felicity of their lives: and when they have counted their money and their sorrows together, they perceive that their eyes have been witty, and their soul sensual, in the loss of modesty and good nature. For it is an ill band of affection, to tie two hearts together by a little thread of red and white: they love only
till

till an ague comes, or the small-pox, or child-bearing, or care, or time, or any thing that can destroy a pretty flower.

Besides these pernicious interruptions of harmony, a man and wife should avoid all offences in the beginning of their conversation. Every little thing can blast an infant blossom; and the breath of the South can shake the tendrils of the vine, when they first begin to curl like the locks of a new-weaned boy:—but when by age and consolidation they stiffen into the hardness of a stem, and by the warm embraces of the Sun, and the kisses of Heaven, have brought forth their clusters, they can then endure the noises of a tempest, and yet never be broken.

So are the early unions of an unfixed marriage; watchful and observant, jealous and busy, inquisitive and careful, and apt to take alarm at every unkind word: all these infirmities and disquietudes proceed either from imprudence, or want of affection; not preserving the colour of decorum, so long as they wear mourning for the death of a friend.

This made Plutarch compare a new marriage to a vessel before the hoops are on; every thing dissolves

dissolves their tender compaginations; but when the joints are tied by a firm compliance, and a proportionable bending, it cannot be dissolved without fire, or the violence of iron. So when covenanted hearts are endeared by successions of long experience, that will dash all little unkindness to pieces. The little boy in the Greek epigram, creeping down a precipice, was invited to safety by the sight of his mother's paps, when nothing else could entice him to return: thus previous endearment will revive and secure that love, which precipitate folly would demolish.

And moreover, let husband and wife infinitely avoid all curious distinctions of *mine* and *thine*; for this hath caused all the law-suits, and all the wars in the world. The riches of a family are a woman's as well as a man's: they are her's for need, for ornament, for modest delight, for the uses of religion, and prudent charity. But as the Earth, the mother of all creatures here below, sends up its vapours at the command of the Sun, and requires them again to refresh her necessities; and they are deposited between them both in the bosom of a cloud, as a common receptacle, that they may cool his flames, and yet descend

to

to make her fruitful: so are the properties of a wife to be disposed of by her lord, and yet all for her provision: it being a part of *his* need to supply *hers*, and serves the interests of both, while it serves the necessities of either.

These are the duties of common regards and equal obligations: what in one is called *love*, in the other is called *reverence*; and what in the wife is *obedience*, the same in the man is *duty*: he provides, and she dispenses: he gives commandments, and she rules by them; he rules her by authority, and she rules him by love: she ought by all means to please him, and he ought by no means to displease her:—For as the heart is set in the midst of the body, and though it strikes to one side by the prerogative of nature, yet these throbs and constant motions are felt on the other side also, and the influence is equal to both: so it is in conjugal duties; some motions are to one side more than the other, but the interest is on both, and the duty is equal in the several instances. If it be otherwise, the man enjoys his wife, as Periander did his departed Melissa, by an unnatural, unpleasing, unhallowed union,

union, useless to all the purposes of society, and dead to content.

It is another sad consideration, that virgins, who leave father and mother and brethren for the protection of an husband, should be sold to the loss of liberty with their own money. Philo observes, that Adam, excusing his folly for eating the fruit, did not say, *The woman, that thou gavest me*, but, *the woman, that thou gavest to be with me.*—A distinction rarely judicious, and elegant, shewing, that she was given to sooth his cares, not for a servile possession : that she was given as an help of amiable utility, not for tyrannical dominion.

In the pure spirit of this institution, let the man rule his wife, as the soul was appointed to rule the body, with careful tenderness in all contingencies : never contradicting its appetites, but when they are evil, and even in a necessary oppugnancy, with a sense of pain : or finally, to speak in a style of more natural compassion, let him rule her, as a nurse does her child, when she causes it to eat, and to be warm, and dry, and quiet : for though their sexes and
and

and powers are different, their affections are solemnly devoted to mingle without confusion.

No man can tell, but a lover of his children, how many delicious accents make his heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness—their stammering—their little angers—their innocence—their imperfections—their necessities—are so many sources of comfort, when the father is delighted without wrath and clamour, and the family from bitterness and wounds are free.

Finally, when the Christian spouse has no studious gallantry in dress—no fucus, but blushing—no brightness ^{but} ~~by~~ purity, she shall be pleasant in life, and in death not in memory divided. It is fit, for a moment, that I infuse a bunch of myrrh into the goblet, and in the manner of Egyptian festivity, serve up sepulchral bones: the very bitterness will awaken meditation, and make the wine wholesome. And those married pairs, who live in remembrance of the account which they are to give, how they have treated each other, shall be admitted to the glorious espousals of Christ, and lie in his bosom through eternal ages. *Amen.*

A
FUNERAL SERMON,
PREACHED AT THE
OBSEQUIES
OF THE
RIGHT HONOUR. AND MOST VIRTUOUS LADY,
THE LADY
FRANCES,
COUNTESS OF CARBERY,
WHO DECEASED OCTOBER 9, 1650,
AT HER HOUSE, GOLDEN-GROVE,
CARMARTHENSHIRE,

By JEREMY TAYLOR, D. D.

LUNERAL SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE

OBSEQUES

OF THE

LIGHT HONOUR AND MOST VIRTUOUS LADY,

THE LADY

FRANCIS

COUNTRESS OF CARBURY

WHO DEPARTED OCTOBER 2. 1657.

AT THE HOUSE, GOLDING-GROVE,

CARBURY, WILTSHIRE.

BY JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

A FUNERAL SERMON.

2 SAM. Chap. XIV, ver. 14.

For we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again: neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.

WHEN our Blessed Saviour, and his Disciples were viewing the Temple, some one among them cried out: *Master! see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here;* to which he made no other reply, but foretold their dissolution; that the ceremonies of service, and the Temple erected for that service, should run to their period, and lie down in their several graves.

Whatever had a beginning, can also have an ending, and it shall die, unless it be watered with the Dew of Heaven, and the purles flowing

from the Fountain of Living Waters, and the Wells of Salvation. And therefore, God provided a Tree in Paradise, to have supported Adam in his *artificial Immortality*: for immortality was not in his nature, but in the management and favour, and superadditions of Jehovah; so that in our first springing from the dust, we might have died, without the continual flux of a rare Providence; so now we are reduced by the Fall, from a favour of Grace to a fatality of Judgment, that *we must needs die*.

That is our sentence, but that is not all: *we are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again*. Always inconsistent and descending, and restless in every place: so do our great and little cares and trifles make us tempestuous, and trouble our faces: and those creatures which have no weapons of defence, are sufficiently armed to vex those parts of men, which are left obnoxious to a Sun-beam, to the roughness of a four graine, to the unevenness of a gravel-stone, to the dust of a wheel, or the unwholesome breath of a star, looking awry upon a sinner.

Infancy,

Infancy, with all its allowances of innocence, hath life, but in Effigy: or, like a spark dwelling in a pile of wood: it is so newly lighted, that every little shaking of the taper, and every ruder breath of air puts it out, and it dies. Childhood is so tender, and yet so unwary; so soft to all the impressions of chance, and yet so forward to run into them; that God knew, there could be no security, without the vigilance of an Angel-keeper: for the eyes of parents, and the arms of nurses, and all the provisions of art, and parental affection, are not sufficient to keep a child from horrid mischiefs, from strange calamities, from early deaths. So that we may well be likened to water; our nature is no stronger, our abode no more certain: if the sluices be opened, it *falls away, and runneth apace*; if its current be stopped, it swells and grows troublesome, and spills over with a greater diffusion: if it be made to stand still, it putrifies: and all this we do.

For in all the process of our health we are running to our grave: we open our own

fluices by viciousness and unworthy actions; we pour in drink, and let out life; we encrease diseases, and know not how to bear them; we strangle ourselves with our own intemperance; we bury our understandings in loads of surfeits, and then roar with disquietude of soul; we bring a new mortality upon ourselves by public wars and private duels, by every thing that is unreasonable, and every thing that is violent; and nothing is to be seen but a grave digged, and a solemn mourning, and a great talk in the neighbourhood; and all this is like water, it cannot be gathered up again.

I mean only, as to any miracle, before the Resurrection: Lazarus, and Tabitha, and the widow of Nain's son, and those souls that appeared at the Resurrection, were the souls of Saints, holy and innocent, within the comprehension of Eternal mercy: for we never read, that a wicked Person felt such a miracle, or was raised from the Grave, to try a second time for a crown. And the Saints surviving should remember, that until their departed friends

friends are gathered up in the Great Harvest of the world, their memories and examples are piously to be retained in mind, as Paul prayed for Onesiphorus, that God would shew him mercy in that day, that fearful and much to be desired day, when the most righteous person shall have need of much mercy, and shall find it: for though to us, they are as water spilt; yet to God they are as water fallen in the sea, safe and united in his Comprehension and Inclosures.

We are now come to the very affecting consideration, that *God doth not respect any person*: in this process to dissolution of body and spirit; if beauty, or wit, or youth, or nobleness, or wealth, or virtue, could have been a defence, and an excuse from the grave, we had not met here to day to mourn over the hearse of an excellent Lady: but there is one beam of comfort in this mystery of death, that though our dead are like persons banished from this world, yet they are not expelled from God; they rest from their labours, and tears are wiped away from their eyes: for in the

state of separation, before the soul be re-invested with her new house, the spirits of all persons are with God, so secured, and so blessed, and so sealed up for glory, that this state of interval and imperfection is, in respect of its certain event and end, infinitely more desirable than all the pleasures, and vanities, and kingdoms of the world.

Certain it is, that an imperfect body, a diseased brain, or a violent passion discomposes the soul from its own freedom, that it is not as it shall be, as it ought to be, as it was intended to be in its purest operation; so that supposing it has any actions of life, in a state of separation, they must and will be more noble and expedite.

That the soul is alive after death, St. Paul affirms, *Christ died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him*: and as nutrition, generation, eating and drinking, are actions proper to the body, and its state; so ecstasies, visions, raptures, intuitive knowledge, self consideration, acts of volition, and reflex acts of understanding are proper to the soul:

soul: and therefore when St. Paul knew not, whether his visions were in the body, or out of the body, it is clear, from his judgment, that the one was as likely as the other; that the soul is as capable of action, alone, as in conjunction.

If in the state of Blessedness there are some actions of the soul, which do not pass through the body, such as contemplation of God, and conversing with spirits, and receiving those influences and rare immissions, which, coming from the mysterious and Holy Trinity, make up the Crown of Glory; it follows, that the necessity of the body's ministry is only during this state of life; as long as it converses with fire and water, and lives on corn and flesh, and is fed by the satisfaction of material appetites; which manner of conversation ceasing, it can be no longer necessary for the soul to be served by phantoms.

And therefore when the body shall be reunited, it shall be so ordered, that then the body shall confess, it gives not any thing, but receives its manner and abode from the soul; and

and that then it comes, not to serve a necessity, but to partake a Glory. For as the operations of the soul here begin in the body, and by it the object is transmitted to the soul; so then they shall begin in the soul, and pass to the body, by a prime and pre-eminent operation: and as the soul of Christ in his three days of separation, did exercise acts of life, of joy and triumph; so it is highly probable, that each soul of the blessed, works clearer, and understands brighter, and discourses wiser, and rejoices louder, and loves nobler, and desires purer, and hopes stronger than it can do here.

I have now done with my text, and am telling you a plain narrative of a life, which by imitation, will make our departure desirable. When Mary and Martha went to weep over their brother's grave, Christ met them there, discoursing of the Resurrection and Faith in his Power. We have no other, we can have no better precedent to follow; and now, that we are coming to weep over the grave of our dear sister, this rare personage, we have many
virtues

virtues to learn, many to imitate, and some to exercise.

She did not love her fortune, for making her noble, but established her Honour by communicating comfort, and doing excellent things: as those creatures are most honorable, which have the greatest power, and do the greatest good.

She had a strict and severe education, in that part of the kingdom, where greatness is too often expressed in great follies and great vices; and God intending to secure this soul to himself, would not suffer her to taste of temptation by wishes of fight, and too near approaches to vanity.

She was married young: and besides her businesses of Religion, seemed to be ordained in the Providence of God to bring this honourable Family part of a fair fortune, and to leave behind her a fairer issue, worth ten thousand times her portion: and as if this had been the business of her life, when she had so far served God's end, he in mercy would

would serve hers, and take her to an early blessedness.

She had so great a love for her lord, so entirely given up to a dear affection, that *she* thought the same things, and loved the same loves, and hated according to the same enmities, and breathed in his soul, and lived, in his presence, and languished in his absence. He only was, (under God) the light of her eyes, and the cordial of her spirits, which was a great enamel to the beauty of her soul, and I chuse to express this rare combination in the words of Solomon, *she forsook not the guide of her youth, nor brake the covenant of her God.*

As she was a rare wife, so she was an excellent mother: for in so tender a constitution of spirit as hers was, there hath seldom been seen a stricter and more curious care of their persons, their deportment, their disposition, and their learning. I have seen a female religion, that wholly dwelt upon the face and tongue;
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that like a wanton, uncultivated tree, spent all its juice in suckers and branches irregular; in leaves, and gum; and after all these goodly outfides, you shall never eat an apple, nor be delighted with the beauties, nor the perfumes of an hopeful blossom. But the devotion of this Lady was fruitful to her family and friends, in sweetness of society,—*not boasting of her cloathing and raiment, nor exalting herself in the Day of Honour.*

She had strange fears and early cares upon her, that nothing might be done in her honourable family, to entail malediction on her innocent posterity. And though her accounts to God were made up of nothing but small parcels, little passions, and angry words, and trifling discontents, which are the allays of the piety of the most holy persons; yet she was early at her repentance, as if she had a revelation of her approaching end: her prayers more frequent, her charity encreasing, her friendships and forgivenesses more communicative, her passions more under discipline; and

and so she trimmed her lamp, to shine in the day-time, before the altar of incense.

I know not by what instrument it happened, but when death drew near, before it made any shew upon her body, or revealed itself by a natural signification, it was conveyed to her spirit: she had a strange persuasion, that the bringing this child should be her last scene of life; and we have known, that the soul, when she is about to disrobe herself of her upper-garment, sometimes speaks rarely; sometimes is prophetical; sometimes God by a super-induced persuasion serves his providence and the salvation of a soul: but so it was, that the thought of death dwelt long with her, and grew from the first step of fancy and fear, to a consent: from thence to a strange expectation: and without the violence of sickness, she died, as if she had done it by design, or too fearful apprehension; or rather she died, as if she had been glad of the opportunity.

In this her tender, delicate, and fine constitution, she was fitted with a death so easy,

so

so unafflictive, that it did not put her patience to a severe trial; so clearly did God remonstrate to all that stood in that sad attendance, that this soul was dear to him, as the signet on his right hand: that as she had done so much of her duty, he would finish her redemption by a singular mercy.

She had in her sickness, (if I may so call it, or rather in the solemnities and graver preparations to death) some curious and well-becoming fears concerning the final state of her soul: but from thence she passed into a deliquium, or a kind of trance, and as soon as she came forth of it, as if it had been a vision, or converse with an Angel, and from his hand had received a scrole from the Book of Life, and there had seen her name enrolled, she cried aloud, (*Glory be to God on high: now I am sure I shall be saved.*)

As there are strange things in the other world, so the unusual glimpses of beatitude to the faithful, are infinitely far from illusions; and I pray God, I may feel those mercies on my death-bed, that she felt, at least the same

same effects of my repentance, as she now feels of her innocence: such was her death; that she did not die too soon; and her life was so useful and excellent, that she could not have lived too long: death consecrates that person, whose excellency was such, that they, who are not displeased at the death, cannot dispraise the life; but they that mourn sadly, think they can never sufficiently commend. *Amen.*

A
MORAL DEMONSTRATION,
PROVING
FROM MANY PROBABILITIES,
THAT THE
RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST
IS
FROM GOD,

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FROM GOD

MORAL DEMONSTRATION, &c.

JOHN, Chap. XVIII. ver. 38.

Pilate saith unto him, what is Truth?

AS many have written in part on the Truth of Christ, which stands by the grandeur of a long and united authority, it may cause infinite persuasion in pious minds, to see the testimonies collected all together: for a man may as prosperously and certainly arrive at his journey's end, though conducted by one that went the way but once before him, as if he had a straight path walled in on both sides.

And here I ask nothing to be granted but the very subject of the question, that both in pretension and in doctrine there was such a person, as Jesus Christ.

For what the histories of that age reported as one of the most eminent transactions of the

world; which by the noise of fame, and the changes of war, by division of families, and prodigies of Heaven, was the care and question of surrounding nations, surely never had any story such points of credibility: for what was less proved, is infinitely believed of Mahomet, that he led multitudes after him upon Earth.—Allow the Son of God but a similar appearance, and then we enquire into the Truth of his Mission; for that he was in the world, and did make pretences, needs no more probation.

And first, the Eternal Spirit in Scripture had given a similitude of Emmanuel, by the Prophets, that all might say at his coming, this is He, that should come. For besides the sound of the Prophets sounding the alarm, there was a strange Star, apparent in the Heavens, above the influence of Pleiades, above the Bands of Orion:—A Star, at which Jerusalem was troubled,—at which Herod in agony, trembled for his throne,—whose very splendour drove him to bloodshed: when Rachel in Ramah wept in distraction for her children. This Son, above all human generation, at whose presence in the womb, the Baptist in his womb leaped

leaped for joy, was proclaimed to Mary and Joseph by two Angels,—to the Shepherds by many Angels,—to the Persians by a Prophecy and a Star,—to the Jews, by the Shepherds,—to the Gentiles by the Wise Men,—to Herod by the Scribes—this Divinity submitted to an humble mansion, unambitious of human glory.

We now proceed to the Baptist crying in the Wilderness, in Spirit and Purity of living anointed for his Lord.—He was conceived in barren old age, after the usual time of conception,—was signified to his father by an Angel, who struck him dumb, for his unbelief:—this man, so great, so revered, so listened to by king and people, by doctors and ideots, by Pharisees and Sadducees,—this man pointed out Jesus, and gave place to the Lamb of God. As God thundered at the giving of the Law, he gave the Mediator an awful and sufficient approbation by a voice, known and accepted, as a pure way of God to man at that period—of easy transfusion, through one ear and one tongue, to the hearts of all succeeding believers.

Or, there would be no government of God upon Earth, unless himself came perpetually

down, because no messenger could shew a passing sound or action to the eye, what he related only to the ears of another; but might prevail as safely with hearers, as if they believed their own eyes and ears. But voices are only parts of his ways, compared with the thunder of his power in miracles over all diseases, infirmities, and death;—of death, in every degree of horror, from the first point in the nobleman's son, then in the damsel dead two hours,—then in the widow's son carried to the burial,—then in Lazarus dead seven days, and four days laid in the tomb.

Whoever can think, a mere man could do this, knows nothing of human weakness, nor the power of an Angel; but whoever thinks it was done by compact with the Devil, must think him to be an intelligence without understanding, as foolish as he was wicked, to aid the Redeemer to his own ruin.

After he had lived in every comportment as an Angel of Light, till the hour of his death, they who had the biggest malice and the weakest accusation, could neither prevail with Pilate to condemn or to find fault with him; but

but he stood innocent and silent, without labour or reply, and needed no more an argument than the Sun needs an advocate, to prove him the brightest Star in the Firmament.

In addition to these wonders was the darkness of the Sun at his Crucifixion, when the Moon was at full; a darkness arising from no cloud; or shadow of a cloud; but because the God of Nature suffered, as a Heathen spoke at that very time, who knew nothing of the sad iniquity. The rending of the rocks, of the veil of the temple, and the bodies of Saints going out of their graves into the city, made the Centurion say of him that was pierced, "verily this man was the Son of God."

In conclusion of this point therefore, immediately respecting the person and pretensions of Christ, we say with the highest and still with the holiest presumption, that no matter of fact can be proved better, than by sight, and sound, and love, and life, and blood.—But as God hates lying, he hates those, who shut their eyes and ears against the Truth—and to refuse belief of heavenly things, by as fair arguments, as we believe earthly things, is an obstinacy, as

contrary to human reason, as it is to Divine Faith.

These things relate to the person of the Holy Jesus, and prove sufficiently, that it was extraordinary, that it was divine, that God was with him, that his power wrought in him; and therefore that it was his will which Jesus taught, and God signed: But then, if nothing of all this had been done, yet even the doctrine itself proves itself, and to come from God.

For it is a doctrine perfective of human nature, that teaches us to love God, and to love one another; to hurt no man, and to do good to every man; it propines to us the noblest, the highest, and the bravest pleasures of the world: the joys of charity, the rest of innocence, the peace of quiet spirits, and the wealth of beneficence: it forbids us only to be Beasts and Devils, in riot, in malice, in murder and revenge. It permits corporal pleasures, where they can best minister to health and societies, to conversation of families, and the honour of communities. It commands obedience to superiors, that we may not be ruined in confusions; it combines governments in laws of peace,

peace, and opposes wars, where they are not just, or not necessary.

It is a religion, that is Life and Spirit: not consisting in ceremonies and external amusements, but in services of the heart, in the real fruit of lips and hands, to our neighbour's necessities and our own designs and devotions. It does not destroy reason, but instructs it in very many things, and complies with it in all, and by its light and heat is as effectual as it is beauteous. It promises every thing that we ought to desire, and yet promises nothing but what it doth effect: it teaches us with ease to mortify these affections, which reason durst scarce reprove, because she hath not strength enough to conquer; and it creates in us those virtues, which reason of herself never knew, and after they are known, could never sufficiently approve. It is a doctrine, in which nothing is superfluous or burdensome, nor yet is there any thing wanting, which can procure happiness to mankind, or by which God may be glorified; and if wisdom, and mercy, and justice, and simplicity and holiness, and purity, and meekness, and contentedness, and charity, be images of

of God and rays of Divinity, then that doctrine, wherein all these shine so gloriously, and in which nothing else is ingredient, must needs be from God; and that all this is true in the Doctrine of Jesus, needs no other probation but the reading of the words.

For that the words of Jesus are contained in the Gospels, that is, in the writings of them who were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of his deeds and discourses, is not at all to be doubted: for it is madness to suppose, the Christians would make a law, which their Master whom they worship never made: the authority of these books is in all points of comparison surely as true, as the authority of the Coran, or the Old Testament: they have been received for 1700 years by all Christian assemblies, with sufficient presumption, security and possession; they have been consented to by a long immemorial acceptance and confessions of all communions. The writers were to be believed, because they performed miracles; they wrote prophecies, which are verified by the event; persons were cured at their sepulchres, a thing so famous, that it was confessed even by the enemies

enemies of the religion: and after all, that which the world ought to rely upon, is the wisdom and the provident goodness of God; all which it concerned, that the religion, which he himself so adorned and proved by miracles and signs, should not be lost, nor any false writings be obtruded instead of true, lest without our fault, the will of God be impossible to be obeyed.

But to return to the thing: all those excellent things, which singly did make famous so many sects of philosophers, and remarked so many Princes of their sects; all them united, and many more, which their eyes dark and dim could not see, are heaped together in this system of wisdom and holiness. Here are plain precepts full of deepest mystery: here are the measures of holiness and approaches to God described: here are obedience and conformity, mortifications of the body, and elevations of the spirit: here are abstractions from Earth, and acts of society and union with Heaven, and degrees of excellencies, and tendencies to perfection, imitations of God, and conversations with him:—These are the heights and descents,
upon

upon the plain grounds of natural reason and natural religion: for here is nothing taught and commanded, but what our reason by nature ought to chuse; and yet nothing of natural reason taught, but what is more perfect by the Spirit of God:—and when there is any thing in the religion that is against flesh and blood, it is only when flesh and blood is against us, and against reason; when flesh and blood would hinder us from great felicity, or bring us into great misery: in fine, it is such a law, that nothing can hinder men to receive and entertain it, but a pertinacious baseness and love to vice, and none can receive it, but those who resolve to be good and excellent; and if the Holy Jesus had come into the world with less splendour of power and mighty demonstrations, yet even the excellency of what he taught, alone makes him fit to be Master of the world.

Here let us consider by what instruments he wrought these mighty changes, and surmounted that human impossibility of persuading men to take pleasure in affliction. He put an end to the Mosaic law, and the Levitical service: he effected

effected this change of practice and principle and ineffectual ablutions, and deceitful oracles, by the doctrine of a Trinity in the Godhead—of a re-union of soul and body—at a distant, dreadful, secret period, on the preparation of temperance, humility, restitution, forgiveness and love.

Here, here it is, that the Divinity of the power is proclaimed. When any one means to effect any thing by opposition to long establishments ecclesiastical or temporal, he must have means, of his own proportionable, or in failure of such, must derive them from the Mighty. See then, with what instruments the Holy Jesus set upon this great reformation of the world.—Twelve men of obscure birth, trades, and quality, without learning, without accomplishments any ways adapted in themselves for sufficiency: these men were sent into the midst of a knowing and wise world, to dispute with the most famous philosophers of Greece: to outwit all the subtilty of Athens: to outpreach all the orators of Rome: to introduce in their several empires, excessively impatient of novelties, such a change, as must be totally destructive

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to their temples and their gods : by a religion, apparently despicable, not apt to do harm, but exposing its professors to harm universally : by a religion contradictory to the military, political, and judicial states of their respective kingdoms, by new precepts of peace, and new modes of judgment :—That such a religion, preached by such mean persons, should triumph over the philosophy and arguments of the subtle, and the sermons of the eloquent, and the power of princes, and the interest of states, and the inclinations of nature, and the blindness of zeal, and the force of custom, and the pleasures of sin, and the arts of the Devil; that is, that it should triumph against wit and power, and money, and malice, and fame and empire; all which are things, which contribute to make piety, not only unsuccessful, but naturally impossible :—this I say, could not be by the proper force of human instruments; for no man can span Heaven with an infant's palm, or govern empires with a diagram.

As it were impudent undoubtedly, to send a footman to command Cæsar to lay down his arms, to disband his legions, and throw himself

self into Tyber, or keep a tavern next to Pompey's theatre; so if a sober man should stand alone, unarmed, undefended, or unprovided, and shall say, that he will make the Sun stand still, or remove a mountain, or reduce Xerxes his army to the scantling of a single troop: he that believes he can do this, must believe he does it by an higher power than he can yet perceive, and so it was in the present transaction: it flourished like a palm by pressure, it grew glorious by opposition, and was demonstrated even by objections. The silence of Dæmons was confessed by Lucian, Porphyry and Celsus, enemies to the Faith; and surely the Disciples of John the Baptist, the Nazarenes, and Ebionites, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, Sergius the President, Dionysius an Athenian Judge, and Polycarpus, Justinus, and Irenæus, Athénagoras and Origen, Tertullian, and Clemens of Alexandria, could not be such fools, as upon a matter not certainly true, but probably false, to unravel their former principles, and to change their liberty for a prison, wealth for poverty, honour for disreputation, and life
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for death, if by such exchange they had not been secured of the truth, and holiness, and the will of God.

But above all these was Saul, a bold and a witty, a zealous and learned young man; who going with letters to persecute the Christians at Damascus, was by a light from Heaven called from his furious march, reprov'd by a voice for his persecuting spirit; was sent for baptism and instruction to Ananias in the city, who trembled at first to give him admission, then recovered, then ordained, then sent him abroad as ambassador of Christ, where he became a prodigy of the world, in all utterance and in all knowledge: in preaching and writing; in labour and sufferance; in government and wisdom:—He was admitted to a sight of our Lord after his Ascension: he was taken up into the Third Heaven: he conversed with Angels: he saw unspeakable things of Paradise: for declaring all these unparalleled revelations to kings and princes, and envious Jews, he could get nothing but trouble here, and nothing hereafter, if it was false: yet he urged the notorioufness of the fact, not feigned, or private, but done at noon day, under the test of competent

competent persons; and it was a thing that proved itself, for it was effective of a *present*, a *great*, and a *permanent* change.

Now, it was no new wonder, but in pursuance of the same union of great and divine things, that the fame and faith of the Gospel was spread with so rapid a diffusion over the habitable Earth: it filled all Asia immediately: it passed presently into Europe, and the farthest Africans: and all the way it went it told nothing but this holy and humble story, that the Messiah, the Mediator their Master, who was lately crucified on Calvary, was risen from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, *above all, God blessed for ever*. In consequence, infinite numbers of all sexes, ages and regions, came into the Crucifix: and he that was crucified in the reign of Tiberius, was in the time of Nero, even in Rome itself, and even in Nero's family, by many persons esteemed as a God; the Cross was worn upon breasts; painted in the air; drawn upon fore-heads; carried on banners; put upon crowns Imperial; and yet the Christians were sought for to punishments, and exquisite punishments sought forth for them: their goods were confiscated; their

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names odious; prisons were their houses, and such tortures invented for them, that Ulpianus has spent seven books in describing their aggravated variety.

Can we therefore suppose all the world, or so great a part of mankind could consent by chance, or suffer such changes for nothing? can we suppose Martyrs, to weary the power of executioners, and Devils to acknowledge the name, and kings and queens, to kiss the feet of those, who brought the glad tydings, unless they were actuated by a Spirit bigger than the Roman Legions? Let this be added to prove the Divinity of Christ.

Again,—He foretold, that His Faith, in spite of all objections and interruptions, should grow: if in peace, it should prosper; if in persecution, it still should prosper: if princes favoured it, the world would come in, because the Christians lived holily; if princes were incensed, Martyrs came in, because the Christians died bravely; he foretold the Mission of the Holy Ghost, after his Ascension, which in ten days after came to pass; he prophesied that the act of Mary Magdalene, anointing his head
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and feet, should spread and survive with the spreading of the Gospel; he foretold, the destruction of Jerusalem, by the Roman arms, by eagles, the general symbols of their military powers; he foretold, that his beloved Disciple, St. John, should live, till his coming to Judgment on Jerusalem; thus his Faith must continue, because it came with such mighty power and demonstration from God; and therefore it came from God, because, according to the Prophecy of Christ, it does, and shall for ever continue, till the restitution of all things.

After his Ascension, the Spirit of prophecy fell upon Agabus, who foretold a dearth to be in the Roman empire; in the days of Claudius Cæsar; it fell also upon St. Paul, who foretold his own binding at Jerusalem, and he with Peter and Jude foretold the heresies that would prevail in Asia after their decease; and the destruction of the Jewish kingdom; accordingly the sad catalysis came soon after, and swept away one million and one hundred thousand; and from that day forward, they have been broken into pieces and bubbles, like oil in a

vessel, kept in their own circles; without priest or temple, without altar or sacrifice, without city or country, without the Land of Promise, or the promise of a blessing, till Jesus is their High-Priest, and Shepherd of their Fold. The Law is become impossible to the remnant of the scattered Jews, because being *corporal, ritual, and local*, it is in all these circumstances of practice vanished away.

So that all the predictions appertaining purely to the Messiah, are most undeniably accomplished in his Person and Ministry, and though the Jews entertain prodigious dreams of a Messiah yet future, by which they have fooled themselves 1700 years together; yet they hope without reason, and are confident without revelation, and pursue a shadow, while they quit the Glorious Body: while in the mean time, the Christian prays for their conversion; as seeing him that is invisible, as seeing the First-Born from the dead, with most perspicacious and purely spiritual eyes, as Elisha saw horses and armies of Angels, which to his unfavoured servant were undiscernable: a believer is at rest in the truth,

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truth, blessed, apparent, and evangelical: he has ineffable confidencies from inward lights; he has such aimiable clarities produced in his soul, that he will die, when he cannot dispute, and is satisfied; he knows not how, and is sure by comforts, and comforted by the excellency of his belief, which speaks nothing but holiness, and light, and reason, and peace, and satisfactions infinite: because he is sure, that all the world can be happy; if they would live by this Faith, and that neither societies of men, nor single persons can have felicity, but by this; and therefore God, who so decrees to make them happy, hath also decreed, that it shall be upon the Earth, till the Earth shall be no more. *Amen.*

Now if against this vast heap of things, any one shall confront the pretences of any other religion, and see how they fail both of reason and holiness, of wonder and Divinity; how they enter by force and are kept up by human interests; how ignorant and unholy, how unlearned and pitiful are their pretences; the darkneses of these must add great eminency

to the brightness of that. The Jewish dispensation, though appointed by Heaven, was appointed only for a time, to give place to the Christian dispensation: it has no Urim or Thummin, no Prophet or vision, nor any communication, but in the way of an ordinary Providence; whereas the Christian Faith is as eternal as the soul of a man, and can no more cease than our spirits can die: we can worship upon mountains and in caves; in fields and churches; in peace and war; in solitude and society; in persecution and sunshine; by night and by day; this Faith, says to the soul, as the lightnings do in Job, to the Creator, "*Here we are:*" it can be solemnized by Clergy and Laity, in the essential parts of, and is the perfection of the soul, and the highest reason of man, and the Glorification of God.

As for the Heathen religion, it is evident, that they are an abuse of the natural inclination which ought to prevail in Divine Worship. They affirmed their deities to be passionate and proud, jealous and revengeful, amorous and lustful, fearful and impatient, weary and wounded; supported

supported by the fraud of Oracles, and arguments of pleasure, and correspondencies of sensuality. Into such impurities Christianity never could have entered, but by entering like rain into a fleece of wool, or the Sun into a window, without noise and violence, to any political constitution: it defended itself by making the person of princes sacred, and was the great instrument of God to perpetuate his mercies to mankind.

Lastly, he that considers the person and pretensions of Mahomet, vicious and tyrannical; that he propounded incredible and ridiculous propositions to his followers; by slaughter, by murder and robbery; that its rewards are allurements to our basest appetites; that it is foolish against the reason of all wisdom; that it did no miracles, and made false prophecies; no man of reason can be fairly persuaded by any arguments, that such a religion ever was the daughter of God, and came down from Heaven.—Since therefore there is nothing to be said for any other religion, and so very much for Christianity, it follows, that there is

no other Name under Heaven by which we can be saved, *but only in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

He that puts his soul upon this cannot perish; nor can he be reproved, who hath so much reason and argument for his Faith, and therefore I pray God, that my soul may be amongst Christians: for this is reason, this is revelation, and cannot be contradicted by any thing surer than itself.

OF THE
SCRUPULOUS CONSCIENCE.

A Scruple is a great Trouble of Mind; proceeding from a little Motive, and a great Indisposition; by which the Conscience, though sufficiently determined by proper arguments, dares not proceed to action, or if it does so, it cannot rest.

IT is a true and profitable observation of Solomon, that too violent blowing and wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: that is, an enquiry after determination, a searching into little corners, and measuring actions by atoms, is not the way to govern, but to disorder our conscience.

That it is a great trouble, is a daily experiment and a sad sight:—some persons dare not eat for fear of gluttony; they fear that they shall sleep too much; and that keeps them waking, and troubles them more, and so their scruples encrease. If they be single persons, they fear that every desire is a burning, and therefore

therefore it is better to marry: in their process to matrimony, they dare not, for fear of neglecting the glory of God: when they are married, they are afraid of indulgence, afraid of carnality, afraid of omission, afraid of the very fearing, that they adhere to *nature*, more than the *spirit*. They repent, when they have not sinned, and accuse themselves without form or matter: their virtues make them tremble, and in their innocence they are afraid: they at no hand would sin, and know not on which hand to avoid it: and if they venture in, as the flying Persians over the river Strymon, the ice will not bear them, or they cannot stand for slipping, and think every step a danger, and every progression a crime, and believe themselves drowned, when they are yet on shore.

Seneca calls a scruple, a fear of doing every thing that is innocent, and an aptness to do every thing that can be suggested: a scruple is a little stone in the foot, if you set it on the ground, it hurts you; if you hold it up, you cannot go forward: it is a trouble where the trouble is over, a doubt where doubts are resolved; it is a little party behind a hedge, when the main
army

army is broken, and the field is cleared: thus, when the conscience is instructed in its way, and girt for action, soon a light trifling reason, or an absurd fear hinders it from beginning the journey, or proceeding on the way, or resting at the journey's end.

Very often it hath no reason at all for its inducement, but proceeds from indisposition of body, from pusillanimity, from a melancholy, troubled head, from sleepless nights, from the society of the timorous, from solitariness, from ignorant, unseasoned, imprudent notices of things, from indigested reading, or a strong fancy, or a weak judgment, abusing reason into irresolution and restlessness. It is indeed, a direct walking in the dark, where we see nothing to affright us, but fancy many things, and those phantasms deeply disturb us, being produced in the lower regions of fancy, and nursed by folly, and born upon the arms of fear.

But, if reason be its parent, then it is born in the twilight, and the mother is so little, that the daughter is a fly, with a short head, and a long sting, even to trouble a wise man, but not enough to satisfy the appetite of a
little

little bird : the reason of a scruple is ever as obscure as the light of a glow-worm, not fit to govern any action, and yet is suffered to stand in the midst of all its enemies, and like the flies of *Ægypt*, vex and trouble the whole army.

This disease is most frequent in women and Monastic persons, in the sickly and timorous, and is often procured by excess in religious exercises, by austerities and disciplines, by indiscreet fastings, and long nights in prayer ; by a multitude of human laws, by a variety of opinions, by impertinent talking of those, who are busily idle : thus by the weakneses of the body and understanding, enervating the strength of the spirit, the enemy of mankind makes religion strike itself upon the face, by the palms and tremblings of its own fingers.

William of Oseney was a devout man, and read two or three books of devotion very often ; and being pleased with the entertainment of his time, resolved to spend so many hours every day in reading them, as he had read over those books several times ; that is, three hours every day. In a short time, he had read over the
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books *three times more*; and began to think, that his resolution might be expounded to signify in a current sense, and that it was to be extended to the future times of his reading; and that now he was to spend *six hours*, every day, in reading those books, because he had now read them over *six times*.

He presently considered, that in half so long a time more, by the proportion of this scruple, he must be tied to *twelve hours* every day, and therefore, that this scruple was unreasonable; that he intended no such thing, when he made this resolution, and therefore that he could not be tied: he knew, that a resolution does not bind a man's self, in things whose reason varies, and where our liberty is entire, and where no interest of a third person is concerned. He was sure, that this scruple would make that sense of the resolution be impossible at last, and all the way *vexatious and intolerable*; he had no leisure to actuate this sense of the words, and by higher obligations he was tied to other duties; he remembered also, that now the profit of those good books was received already and grew less, and now became changed into a trouble and
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an inconvenience, and he was sure he could employ his time better; and yet after all this heap of prudent and religious considerations, his thoughts revolved in a restless circle, and made him fear, he knew not what: he was sure he was not obliged, and yet durst not trust it: he knew his rule, and had light enough to walk by it, but was as fearful to walk in the day, as children are in the night.

Well!—being weary of his trouble, he tells his story, receives advice, to proceed according to the sense of his reason, not to the murmurs of his scruple; he applies himself accordingly.—But here he enters into new fears; for though he rests in this, that he is not obliged to multiply his readings, yet he begins to think, that he must do some equal good thing, in commutation of the duty: for though that particular instance became intolerable and impossible, yet he tied himself to perform that which he believed to be a good thing; and though he was deceived in the particular, yet he was right in the general, and therefore that for the particular he must make an exchange.

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He does so; but as he is doing it, he starts, and begins to think, that every commutation intended for ease, is in some sense or other, a lessening of his duty, a diminution of his spiritual interest, and a note of infirmity: and then he also fears, that in judging concerning the matter of his commutation, he has been remiss, and partial. Now he considers, that he ought to consult with his *Superiors*; and as he is going to do so, he begins to think, that his Superior did once chide him for his scruple, and that now much more he will do it, and therefore will rather seek to abolish the opinion of obligation, than change it into another burden: and since he knows this beforehand, he fears, lest it should be expounded to be in him, an artifice to get himself eased or chidden out of his duty, and cozened out of his obligation.—What shall the man do? he dares not trust himself; and if he goes to another, he thinks that this will the more condemn him; he suspects himself, but this other renders him, in his poor imagination, justly to be suspected by himself and others too.—Hereupon, he seeks to God in prayer, but considers the answer of
peace

peace may be withheld, for want of his own most fervent co-operation.

After a great tumbling of thoughts and sorrows, he begins to believe, that this scrupulousness of conscience is a temptation, and a punishment of his sins, and then he heaps up all that ever he did; and all that he did not; and all that he might have done; and all that he never could do with comfort; and seeking for a remedy grows infinitely worse; till at last, God pitying the innocence and trouble of the man, made the evil to sink down with its own weight; and like a sorrow, that breaks the sleep, at last growing big, loads the spirits; and bringing back the sleep that it had driven away, cures itself by the greatness of its own affliction.

Again, a conscience, sufficiently instructed by proper arguments of persuasion, may without sin proceed to action, against the scruple of stronger tremblings.

This is the best remedy that is in nature and reason. Saint Bernard preached rarely well, and was applauded; but the Devil offering him the temptation of vain-glory, he in resisting it, began
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to think that he had better leave off preaching, than begin to be proud: but instantly the Holy Spirit discovered to him the deception of the Serpent in this artifice; to which in majesty of spirit he answered,—“ *I neither began for thee, Satan, nor for thee will I leave off.*” So, against a doubting conscience a person may not work, but against a scrupulous one he may; for a scrupulous conscience does not take away the proper determination of the understanding: it is like women handling a frog or a chicken, which all their friends tell them can do them no hurt; and they are convinced in reason that they cannot; they believe it, and know it; and yet when they take the little one into their hands, they shriek, and sometimes hold fast, and find their fears confuted; and sometimes they let go, and find their reason useless.

If the scruple prevails upon our weakness so far as to rattle the better reasons, then the conscience loses its *rule* and its *security*; and the scruple passes into a *doubt*, and the law into a *consultation*, and the judgment into *opinion*, and the conscience into an undiscerning undetermined faculty.

A Christian, in the diocese of Salamis, being faint in his stomach before the reception of the Holy Sacrament, disputes, whether he may take a cordial or a glass of wine. Upon enquiry he is told, that to receive the sacrament, *virgine saliva*, with fasting spittle, was a custom with no authority, no sanction of Apostles, but merely a pious fancy, approaching to appearances of reverence; and that it ought to yield to innocent and necessary comforts:—upon this account being satisfied, he drinks a little, is well, and communicates with health, and joy, and holiness.

But afterwards reflecting upon what he had done, he begins to fear he had not done well: that he had done this unusual thing against the custom of the church,—that it was at least, *infirmity* in him:—and upon what account it would stand with God, he knew not; which upon his own most gentle sentence was, at least, *infirmity*; and twenty other things he thought of, which signified nothing, but *did* something; that is, they meant no good, but did him great evil: and finding himself gotten into a new net, he calls for help, but is told, that he must get out of it

it the same way that he came in; and that which was a sufficient cause of his doing the action, was sufficient also for the justification of it. These reasons he ought to confront against the flies and little pretensions which disturbed his mind:—if so, he would soon perceive, that he had reason to be ashamed of prostituting and debauching his understanding, by such trifles and images of argument.

For, let a man look to his grounds when he begins to act; and when he has acted, let him remember that he did his duty, and give God thanks: for if in the first instance, he walked by all the light he had, he is not tied to walk it over again: for as God will not of a child exact the prudence and cautions of a man, but in every age expects a duty answerable to the abilities of it; so it is in all the stages of our reason, and growing understanding.

Separate therefore your question as much as you can from interest, that your determination and enquiry may be pure: then consider, that to incline to the scruple, and to neglect the stronger reason that stands against it, is to take the worse end, it is to do that which must seem worse:

and then it may be remembered, that if the scrupulous is afraid and anxious, by neglecting the stronger reason, the neglect of that will run upon him like a torrent or a whirlwind, and the scruple as a bulrush, will not support his building. The very design of the Covenant Evangelical is, that our duties are demanded, and our sins accounted for according to the measure of a man, and not by the proportions of an Angel: it will follow, that by this goodness of God, and a moral diligence, and a good heart, we are secured from infirmity, but not from presumption: for let us weigh never so exactly, we may miss grains or scruples; but to snatch greedily at the little over-running dust of the balance, and to throw away the massive ingots that sunk the scales down, is the greatest folly in the world.

The lines of duty are set down so clear and legible, are so agreeable to reason, so demonstrable on their proper principles, so easy and plain, that we need not run to a prophet to find it out: the counsels of God are not like the oracles of Apollo, double in their sense, intricate in their expression, secret in their meaning, deceitful

deceitful in their measures, and otherwise in their event than they could be in their expectations. No, the word of God, in the lines of duty, is open as the face of Heaven, bright as the Moon, healthful as the Sun's influence: and this is certainly true, that when a thing becomes obscure, though it may oblige us to a prudent search, yet it binds us under no guilt, only so far as it is, or may be plainly understood.

As the melancholy man muses long, and to no purpose; he thinks much, and thinks of nothing; so the scrupulous man fears exceedingly, but he knows not *what* or *why*: he fears God is angry with him for not doing his duty, and yet he does whatsoever he can learn to be his duty: let him therefore learn, to give his scruples less and less entertainment, and resolutely determine at last to throw them away: let him change the tremblings of his spirit to a more considerable object, and be sure, if he fears little things, to fear great things *greatly*; every known sin let him be sure to avoid, *little or great*; for by this purity he shall seek God in peace and truth; and the honesty of his heart will bear him

out from the mischief, if it doth not quit him from the trouble of the scruple.

Let the scrupulous avoid all excess in mortifications and corporal austerities, because these are apt to trouble the body, and consequently to disorder the mind; and by the prevailing fond opinions of the world, they usually produce great opinions of sanctity, and ignorant confidences of God's favour; and by spending the fervour of the man in exterior significations, make him apt to take his measures from imperfect notices; and then his religion shall be scruple and impertinency, full of troubles, but good and profitable for little or nothing.

It is wonderful, says Cardan, to consider, what strange products there are of fasting; dreams, superstition, contempt of torments, desire of death, obstinacy in opinion, and madness. To all these, fasting does naturally prepare us; and concerning Hilarion, it is reported by Saint Jerom, that he was so lean and dry with fasting and watching, that his flesh would scarce cleave to his bones:—then his desires and capacities of sleep went away, and for want of sleep he must needs grow light-headed, and then the illusions
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of the Devil were prepared and certain to prevail;—then his brains crowded; and he heard in the desert, children weeping—sheep bleating—bulls lowing—rattling of chains—and all the phantastic noises raised by the Tempter, to his mischief. Much to the same purpose is by Athanasius reported of Saint Anthony; and this excess made Jerom scrupulous in reading Tully's Oration; and his own dreams, and not an Angel, whipped him from making and reading good Latin and good sense. Thus unbidden austerities and unbounded abstinence, have turned the fear of God into amazement, and dread into distraction.

When Saint Anthony was troubled with a scrupulous conscience, that so amazed him, that he thought it was impossible for him ever to arrive at Heaven; an Angel came to him in the likeness of an Hermit—or rather, an Hermit spake to him like an Angel, and said,—“ Sometimes labour with thy hands,—then fall on thy knees and pray,—then refresh thy body,—then sometimes rest,—then labour again;—and so shalt thou be saved.” Let us take care that our religion be like our life, not done like pictures,

taken when we are most curiously dressed out, but looking as the actions of our life are dressed; that is, so as things can be constantly done; that is, that it be dressed with the usual circumstances, imitating the examples and usages of the best and most prudent persons of his own communion: striving to be singular in nothing; not doing violence to any thing of nature, unless it be an instrument to vice. For in scrupulous and melancholy persons, nature is to be cherished in every thing where there is no danger; that is, where she is not *petulant* and *troublesome*: because such people have more need of something to repair their house, than to lessen it.

Let the scrupulous take care, that they make no vows of any lasting employment. For the disease is already within, and new matter from without, will make new cases of conscience, and new fears and scruples upon the manner, and degrees, and circumstances of the performance. Therefore, whatever good thing they intend, let them do it when they can, when it is pleasant, when it is convenient, and always reserve their liberty. For besides that to do otherwise must needs multiply scruples, it is
also

also more pleasing to God, that we make our services to be every day *chosen*, than after one general choice, to have the particulars *done* and *bated* in the act.

But that I may sum up many particulars in one.—The scrupulous person must avoid *those companies*, and *those employments*, and those *Books*, from whence the clouds arise; especially the books of ineffective and phantastic notion; such as are Legends of Saints, *ridiculously and weakly invented*, furnished out for *ideas*, not for actions of common life, with dreams and false propositions. For the scrupulous and fearful will easily be troubled, if they find themselves fall short of those fine images of virtue, which some have described; so deep indeed, that they make a *fine picture*, but *like no body*. Such also are the books of Mystical Theology, which have in them, the most high, the most troublesome, the most mysterious nothings in the world, and little better than the effluxes of a religious madness.

In fine, a scruple may arise in doing every duty, in the remembrance of every action: and to stop one gap when the evil may enter in at five hundred, I suppose not worthy my labour:

labour: if the scrupulous endeavours to reduce his body to a fair temper—to enkindle in his thoughts a great and gradual love of God, and high opinions of mercy—to pursue the *purgative way* of faith—to extinguish vice, and perform purity, frequently and constantly, this will affect him with sufficient humility, and by perfect obedience cast out the torment of fear,

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A CONSIDERATION,

IN WHAT CASES

THE LAWS OF CHRIST

ARE TO BE EXPOUNDED

TO

A SENSE OF EASE AND LIBERTY.

part of our duty may be omitted in compliance with those influences which are by

SINCE the great design of the Law of God is a perfection perpetually growing in this world, without arriving at its full state and period; that sense which sets us most forward, is the most intended; and therefore this way, is not only to quiet the doubt, but to govern and rule the conscience, in the measures of God, and the little capacities of man.

If the strict and severer sense of the law be too great for the state and strength of the man;
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that is, if it be apt to make him despair,—to make him throw away his burden,—to make him tire and be weary of, and to hate religion, his infirmities are to be pitied, and the severest sense of the law is not to be exacted from him. Every law of Heaven being a design of making a man happy, surely, every commandment of God is then best understood, when it is made to do most good, and is rescued from being an occasion of evil. -

But this at no hand means that any material part of our duty may be omitted, in compliance with those infirmities, which are by resolution surmountable: that burden of soberness, righteousness, and godliness, which the wisdom of God has made reasonable and tolerable, our necessity and interest makes unavoidable, and love will make delectable and easy.

But the burden, which can and may be lessened, is the burden of the degrees of intension, which consists not in a mathematical point, but is capable of growth: whatever is of such a nature: as is always to encrease in this

this life, in that such abatements may be made, as will fit the person and the state. No man is to be quarrelled at, for *how much* he believes, or how *deep* he loves, in the first progressions of his piety;—only he is to be invited on by proper and fair inducements; and if he stands still always, as he is to be suspected for want of love, so he is to be warned of his danger, and thrust forward by the memory of the best examples.

Thus it may not upon any terms be permitted to any weak person to do an act of injustice,—to blaspheme God,—to reproach his parents,—to be lascivious,—to slander his brother,—to neglect his children,—to separate from his wife, because he is weary of her—this I say, must never be permitted, for fear, that if we do not indulge him in these points, we should drive him from our communion:—we are not to promise Heaven to bad livers, so proceeding, so persisting in their sins, for fear of offending as they may call it, a weak conscience; but what is in reality, a conscience seared with an ~~hot~~ iron:—that is, we must not allow any man
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to do one evil, to hinder him from another, or give him leave to break one commandment to preserve another: to comply with any wickedness in these views, is deceitful and destructive to the Minister and the man; but to comply with little weaknesses, founded in a frail constitution, this is not quenching the smoking flax, and this in charity is to be permitted.

Thus,—If it be enquired, whether our sorrow for our sins ought to be as sharp and full of agony, as the sorrow of a mother for the death of her only child? this being a question of degrees which cannot consist in an indivisible point, is never limited or determinate: any degree consistent with the main duty, may be permitted him, whose necessity requires such indulgence:—and if he be sorrowful in such a degree, as to move him to pray passionately and perseveringly for pardon—any degree, that begets in him a wise caution and dereliction of sin,—a war and a victory,—a death unto sin, and a life of righteousness,—the penitent is not to be prejudiced, either by the degree of his sorrow, or the thickness of its edge; and the
commandment

commandment of general repentance is so to be expounded, as to secure the duty, and secure the man too.

And if he be told, that this sorrow in repentance must be supreme and so severe, even so far as almost to swallow him up with overmuch sorrow; he that finds this impossible (as it is to burst into tears when we please) will let penitence alone; for it were as good never awhit, as never the better: but then he that tells him so, hath bound a burthen too heavy on his brother's shoulder: for if God cherishes the babes in Christ, and is pleased with every step of our progression, then it is certain, they who are but as babes in Christ, are to be treated accordingly.

But then, if the question be concerning the integrity of the repentance, he that is told that restitution, if in his power, must attend his repentance to attain pardon; if he will kick at religion for requiring this duty, he is not to be permitted in his folly. I have read of a gentleman, who being on his death bed, (and his Confessor searching and dressing his wounded soul),

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was called to make restitution of a considerable sum of money; his Confessor found him desirous to be saved,—a lover of his religion,—and yet to have a kindness for his estate, which he wished to be entirely transmitted to his beloved heir. He would repent of all other iniquities, and hoped for mercy; and resolved in case of recovery, to live strictly, free from all future injustice, and to relieve the poor continually: but to make restitution, he said, was altogether against him, and he hoped the commandment would not require it of him; and he desired to be relieved by an easy and favourable interpretation:—for it is ten thousand pities, so many good actions and good purposes should be vain; but it is worse, infinitely worse, if the man should perish.

In this case, what should the Confessor do? shall not the man be relieved, and his piety accepted? or shall the rigour and impertinent niceness of the Confessor cast away a soul, either in future misery, or present discomfort?—neither the one nor the other was to be done: and the good man had only to consider, what God had made

made necessary, not what the vices of the penitent, or his present follies had made so.

Well, the priest insists upon his first resolution,—the money to be restored; the poor clinick uneasy in the loss of a duty, desires the Confessor to deal with his son, and try if he could be made willing that his father might go to Heaven at his charge. He attempted it; but the son answered with extreme rudenesses and injurious language, which caused great trouble to the priest, and to the dying father.

At last the Confessor found out this device; telling the penitent, that unless by corporal penances, there could be made satisfaction in exchange for restitution, he knew no hopes:—but because the profit of the estate which was obliged to restitution, was to descend upon the son, he thought something might be hoped, if, by way of commutation, the son would hold his finger in a burning candle for a quarter of an hour. The father being overjoyed at this loop-hole of Eternity, this glimpse of Heaven, and the certain retaining of the whole estate, called to his son, told him the condition, and the advantages of

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them both; making no question, but he would gladly undertake the penance.

But the son with indignation replied, he would not endure so much torture to save the whole estate. To which the priest, spying the advantage, made this quick return to the old man.—Sir, if your son will not for a quarter of an hour endure the pains of a burning finger to save your soul, will you to save a portion of the estate for him, endure the flames of Hell to eternal ages? The unreasonableness of the odds, and the ungratefulness of the son, and the importunity of the priest, and the fear of Hell, and the indispensible necessity of restitution, awakened the old man from his lethargy, and he bowed himself to the rule, made restitution, and had hopes of pardon, and present comfort.

Thus if we consider things without the prejudice of easy and popular opinions, though it be said, that to tell truth, is an act of justice, yet this is not true in all propositions; but in such truths, as concern a man, *for some real good to him, or for some imaginary good, which hath no real evil.* But when the telling of a truth will certainly

certainly be the cause of evil to a man, though he have a right to truth, it must not be given him to his harm: it is like the giving to a madman his own sword; for you had better give him a wooden dagger, though the other be his own. Truth is justice when it does good; when it serves the ends of wisdom, or advantage, or real pleasure, or something that ought or may be desired; and every trifling truth is no more justice, than every restitution of a straw in the street to the right owner, is a duty.

Other dividers of the truth there are in the Church of Rome, schoolmen, casuists, critics and preachers, to each their trades and distinct principles; but to avoid all imposition, all dissatisfaction in cases of conscience, let prudence conduct piety, and piety lead justice, and both be sanctified by the word of God and of prayer; which like the paranympths of a virgin in the solemnity of marriage, help to lead and to adorn her: and therefore, whether *interest* or *indulgence* are to be preferred, in making up a probable opinion, is just to be answered as if we should

ask, which is best of *feathers* or *wool*? they both have their excellencies in order to *warmth*; and yet if you offer to swallow them down, they will infallibly choke you.

QUESTION ON GAMING.

Whether or no the making and providing such instruments, which usually minister to it, is by interpretation such an aid to the sin, as to involve us in the guilt?

TO this I answer, first in general, that all those arts, and trades, which minister only to vanity and trifling pleasures, are of ill fame, such as jugglers, tumblers, players, fencers, or the like: because every Christian is to labour with his hands, that which is good, or true, or just, or pure, or lovely, or of good report: and it will be hard to reduce vagrant mimics to any of these heads. But I cannot see reason enough to say, that if a second person sins, by using these arts and their productions, the artist is partaker of the crime: because he, designing only to maintain himself, and to please the eyes, and ears, and youthful passions of others, may possibly not communicate in their sin,

who have over-acted their liberty and their vanity. But because such persons are not so wise as to discern so nicely one formality from another, but desire upon any terms to get as much money as they can, therefore such persons ought to be reprov'd, though the arts themselves might otherwise be tolerated. Alexander did very well to a fellow, who made it his trade and livelihood, to stand at a distance and throw little pease in at the eye of a needle made on purpose just so big as would receive them: the fellow seeing the prince admire his dextrous aim, expected a great reward; and the prince, observing the fellow's expectation, rewarded him with a whole bushel of peas. It was a reward worthy of such an employment. A man cannot be blamed, for having such an art, but he that makes that to be his trade, is no better than an idle person: and therefore, although he cannot be said merely for his art to be in a state of damnation, yet, because if other things were well, he would soon employ himself better, therefore such persons when they come near a spiritual guide,

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are to be called off from that which at the best, is good for nothing, and stands too near a sin, to be endured in the scrutinies of Life Eternal.

But some inquire, whether the trade of Card-makers and Dice-makers be lawful? and the reason of their doubt is, because these things are used by the worst of men to very vile purposes, and therefore are suspected as guilty in part of the consequent crimes.

To which I answer, that some things minister to sin immediately, others mediately only, and by intervention of something else: some minister to sin inevitably, by design and institution, others by the fault of them that use them ill: and lastly, some things to evil, and to no good, others to good and evil promiscuously. These three distinctions make but one difference of things, but give several reasons of that difference. Those things which minister to sin immediately, by their very nature and design, and to no good, except by accident, are certainly unlawful: and of this there is no question, for all the reasons contained in

their descriptions, *they are of evil, and they are evil, and they tend to evil.* But if they can minister to good, if they are innocent of themselves, if they can be used without doing hurt, although they are generally abused, yet he that makes them in order only to such uses, to which of themselves they can and ought to minister, partakes not of the sin of them, that abuse the productions of his art. This is remarkable in the case of pictures and images; concerning the making of which there was a great question in the Primitive Church, but the case of conscience they thus determined. It was unlawful to make pictures or images for Heathen Temples, or for any use of religion: he that makes them, that they may be worshipped, partakes of his sin that does worship them. But because the art of statuary and painting might be used to better purposes, therefore they were advised to separate them from all approaches to religion. Such also is the answer concerning cards and dice. But although this be but an instance of this rule; yet because it relates to the practice of so great a part of mankind,

mankind, it may deserve to be considered alone in order to that relation and that practice. For, it wholly depends upon this, if it be innocent, if it can be good to play at cards, and dice, then the trade of making the instruments of playing, is also innocent. If not, that which ministers to nothing but sin, must be of the kindred of sin, and in the same condemnation. Many fierce declamations from ancient sanctity have been uttered against cards and dice, by reason of the craft used in the game, and the consequent evils, as invented by the Devil. And indeed, this is almost the whole state of the question; for there are so many evils in the use of these sports, they are made trades of fraud and livelihood, they are accompanied so with drinking and swearing, they are so scandalous by blasphemies and quarrels, so infamous by mispending precious time, and the ruin of many families, they so often make wise men fools and slaves of passion, that we may say of those who use them inordinately, they are in an ocean of mischief, and can hardly swim to shore, without perishing.

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On this account the civil laws of Ægypt and Rome sent a detected gamester to banishment, or confined him in the quarries: and when drinking and gaming are joined so frequently, that they are knit in a proverb, that these together baffle the spirit of a man and drive away the spirit of God, that they weaken the mind, without a wound, it is no wonder that Christian Magistrates have forbidden it so fiercely, and censured it so severely.

But if the case can be otherwise, if playing can become an innocent recreation, then all these terrible and true sentences will not reach them that so use it. And indeed, even amongst those places and Republics, where such gaming was so highly condemned, and so severely punished, some of their braver men did use it, but without the vile appendages, and therefore without scandal or reproach.

For, first in general, it cannot misbecome a wise and good man to unbend his bow, and to relax the severities, the strictures, and more earnest tendencies of his mind. Porcius Cato, with all his severity would play sometimes, for recreation.

recreation. And if cards and tables have in their own nature nothing that is evil, provided it can also be separated from other appendages, from the crimes and from the reproach, from the danger and from the scandal, that which only remains, is, that they may be used, as well as other innocent divertisements. In the case so stated, we suppose them only to be relaxations of the mind, said Julian, such little employments are like the pauses of music, they are *rests* to the spirit, and intervals of labour: and therefore John of Salisbury allows of every game, if it can ease our griefs, or alleviate our burdens without the loss of our innocence.

Now, that cards and dice are allowable I do not know any reason to doubt. For, if they be unlawful, it is because they are forbidden, or because there is in them something that is forbidden.—They are no where of themselves forbidden; and what is in them, that is criminal or suspicious? Is it because there is chance and contingency in them? So there is in all human affairs: in merchandise, in laying wagers, in all consultations and wars, in jour-
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neys and agriculture, in teaching and learning, in putting children to school, or keeping them at home, in the price of markets, and the vendibility of commodities. And if it be said, that there is in all these things an over-ruling Providence; though no man can tell in what manner, or by what means, the divine Providence brings such things to a determinate event, yet it is certain, that every little thing, as well as every great thing is under God's government, and our recreations, as well as our wagers. But, what if it be, and what if it be not? He can never be suspected in any criminal sense to tempt the divine Providence, who by contingent things recreates his labour, and having acquired his refreshment hath no other end to serve, and no desires to engage the divine Providence to any other purpose, and this end is sufficiently secured by whatsoever happens. I know nothing else, that can be pretended to render evil appendages, which are so frequently attending this kind of game, besides that they are near also to other exercises, as to these, bowling, horse-racing, cock-fighting,

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the fight of quails and partridges, bull-baiting, billiards, and all other games for money and victory, to some more, and to some less; besides this I say, the evil appendages are all separable from these games, and till they be separated, they are not lawful; but they may be separated by the following advices.

Rules of conducting our Sports and Recreations.

1. Let no one's affections be addicted immoderately to them, because in the kingdom of folly, we are most pleased with those things by which we have the least profit: and the want of doing us good is supplied by doing us pleasure. Their use and abuse is, as in food and sleep, when they are necessary comforts, but not frequent, not long. In these a little time may be spent, but not all. The limits of these things are not so streight as necessity, nor yet so large as humour or desire: but as a man may drink to quench his thirst, and to ease his grief, and he may yet drink more to refresh his sorrow, and to alleviate his spirits, provided he turn not his liberty into a snare, so he may in his recreation and his sports.

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To this purpose was that saying of Plato, "It is no great matter to play at dice or tables, but to be accustomed to it, is a great matter,"—that is, to make it a portion of our business, an expence of our time due to worthy employments; and therefore in the laws, not the action itself, but the abuse, and particularly the frequency, is noted and forbidden. A man may innocently, and to good purposes go to a tavern, but they who frequent them, have no excuse, unless their innocent business does frequently engage, and their severe religion bring them off safely. And so it is in these sports; there is only one cause of using them, and that comes but seldom, the refreshment, I mean, of myself or my friend, to which I minister in justice or in charity; but when our sports come to that excess, that we long and seek for opportunities; when we tempt others, are weary of our business, and not weary of our game; when we sit up till midnight, and spend half days, and that often too; then we have spoiled the sport, it is not a recreation but a sin.

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2. He that means to make his games lawful, must not play for money, but for refreshment. This, though few may believe, yet is the most considerable thing to be amended in the games of civil and sober persons. For the gaining of money can have no influence into the game to make it the more recreative, unless covetousness holds the box. The recreation is to divert the mind or body from labours, by attending to something that pleases and gives no trouble; now this is in the conduct of your game, in the managing a prosperous chance to advantage, and removing the unprosperous from detriment and loss of victory, so to cross the proverb.

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and that by wit he may relieve his adverse chance, and by a symbol learn to make good and virtuous use of every cross accident. But when money is at stake, either the sum is trifling, or it is considerable. If trifling, it can be of no purpose unless to serve the ends of some little hospitable entertainment or love-feast, and then there is nothing amiss; but if considerable,

able, 'a wide door is opened to temptation, and a man cannot be indifferent to win or lose a great sum of money, though he can easily pretend it. If a man be willing or indifferent to lose his own money, and not at all desirous to get anothers, to what purpose is it that he plays for it? If he be not indifferent, then he is covetous or he is a fool; he covets what is not his own, or unreasonably ventures that which is. If without the money, he cannot mind his game, then the game is no divertisement, no recreation, but the money is all the sport, and therefore covetousness is all the design: but if he can be recreated by the game alone, the money does but change it from lawful to unlawful, and the man from being weary to become covetous, and from the trouble of labour or study, remove him to the worse trouble of fear, or anger, or impatient desires. Here begins the mischief, here men begin for the money to use vile arts; here cards and dice begin to be diabolical, when players are witty to defraud and undo one another; when estates are ventured, and families are made sad
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and poor by a luckless chance. And what sport is it to me to lose my money, if it be at all valuable? and if it be not, what is it to my game? But sure the pleasure is in winning the money, that certainly is it. But they who make pastime of a neighbour's ruin, are the worst of men, said the comedy. But concerning the loss of our money, let a man pretend what he will, that he plays for no more than he is willing to lose, it is certain we ought not to believe him; for if that sum is so indifferent to him, why is not he easy to be tempted to give such a sum to the poor? whenever this is the case, he sins, that games for money beyond an inconsiderable sum; let the stake be nothing, or almost nothing, and the cards or dice are innocent, and the game as innocent as push-pin: when we play only for recreation, we expose nothing to hazard, and therefore it cannot be a criminal tempting of God, as it is in gaming for money, where no wit, no observation, no caution can save our stake, for says the epigram, no man is crafty enough to play against an ill hand, and therefore to put a considerable interest

to the hazard of a family's ruin, or at least more than we would give to Christ, is a great tempting of God. And in these cases, as I have often heard from them that have skill in such things, there are such strange chances, such promoting of a hand by fancy, and little arts of geomancy, such constant winning on one side, such unreasonable losses on the other, and these strange contingencies produce such horrid effects, that it is not improbable, that God hath permitted the conduct of such games of chance to the Devil, who will order them so where he can do most mischief; but without the instrumentality of money he could do nothing at all.

There are two little cases pretended to lessen this evil, and bring it from unlawful to lawful. The one is, that when a man hath lost his money, he desires to play on for no other reason, but to recover his own: the question is, whether that be lawful or no. To this I can give no direct answer, for no man can at first tell, whether it be or no; but at the best it is very suspicious, for it engages him upon more loss
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of time, and he tempts God in a further hazard, and gives himself the lie, by making it appear, that, whatever he pretended, he did play for more than he was willing to lose. He plays on that he may give over, and loses more that he may not lose so much, and is vexed with covetousness, and chides his fortune, and reproves he knows not what: so that by this time I can tell whether he sined or no: for though it was hard to say, whether he did well or ill to desire the recovery of his money, yet when we see upon what terms it is designed and acted, the question is very easy to be resolved, and the man had better sit down with that loss, than venture a greater, and commit more sins.

The other case is this—If I can without covetousness of money play, is it then lawful? and to shew, that I am not covetous, I will give the money I win, to my servants or the poor.—When Theodoric king of the Goths won at dice or tables, he was very bountiful to his servants, and being overpleased with his

good fortune, would grant them any thing. But Augustus did use to do this thing bravely; he would forgive twenty-thousand crowns, to those, of whom he had won it, and chuse this bounty, as a way to immortality. Now, it is true, this is a fair indication, that avarice was not the prevailing ingredient, but to him that considers it wisely, it will appear to be but a splendid nothing. For what kind of sport is that, to bring it into my power to oblige my play-fellow with his own money, and what is that bounty, by which I reward my friends and servants with another man's estate?—Parysatis did it yet more innocently, when playing with her young son Artaxerxes, she on purpose lost a thousand darics at a throw, to help the young prince to money. Thus far it was well enough; for I doubt not, but it is as lawful to lose my money, as to give it away, if there be nothing else in it: but besides, that it is not so honourable, it may be, he that plays against me, is not of my mind, or of my ability, and I correspond to him in an action, in which he is

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not so innocent as I should be, if I did not something minister to his evil; so that though I play, that I may oblige him, yet there are so many circumstances required to keep myself and him innocent, that it is a thousand times better in some cases, to give him something, and in all cases to play for nothing.

In the civil laws of the Romans, all the money won by gamesters was spent upon public works; and even with us, no man can play lawfully at such games, but those who are dispassionate and of sober spirits, under the command of reason and religion; and therefore to play for money, will be quickly criminal, for the heart is more troubled at the loss of money than a funeral, and there is but little sport in such games. For this, Alexander set a fine on two friends, because they did not play but contend, as in a battle. Seneca tells us, that Julius Canus was playing at tables, when the Centurion, leading a troop of men to a desperate service, called him to attend.

attend. Canus knew the danger well enough, but being summoned, bid his play-fellow tell the men upon the tables; and now, says he, do not say when I am dead, that you had the better of the game; and desired the Centurion to bear him witness, that he had one man more than the other.—He that is thus even and serene may fairly play; but he that would be so, must not venture considerable portions of his estate, nor any thing, the loss of which displeases him, and shakes him into passion. Not that every displeasure, though for a trifle, is criminal; but that every degree of it tends to evil, and the use of it is not safe, and the effect may be intolerable: if the chances will not run as we will have them, or if our passions will not, then it is at no hand safe to play; unless to fret, and vex secretly for trifles, to swear and lie, to blaspheme and curse, to cheat and to swear, to covet and to hate can be innocent.

Upon these accounts, young men should be withheld from such dangerous amusements,

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because they have fierce desires, and quick
angers, and by chance are soon kindled into
flame. It is a sad story, that is told of the
Emperor Claudius his only son, who when he
had lost all his money at dice, and had tired
out all his invention for the getting of more, stole
a rich jewel from his father's closet, his tutor
knowing and concealing the crime. But it
came to the Emperor's ear, and produced
this tragedy; he disinherited his son; ba-
nished his play-fellows, and put the tutor to
death.

In plays and games then, as in other enter-
tainments, we must neither do evil, nor seem
to do evil; we must not converse with evil
persons, nor use our liberty to a brother's
prejudice or grief. We must not do any
thing, which he with probability, or with
innocent weakness thinks to be amiss, until
he be rightly instructed; but, where nothing
of these things intervene, and nothing of
the former evils is appendant, we may use
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our liberty with reason and sobriety: and then, if this liberty can be so used, and such recreations can be innocent, as they assuredly may, there is no further question, but those trades, which minister to these divertifements, are innocent and lawful.

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